

## Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel Hubbard Bell, June 14, 1911

Beinn Bhreagh, near Baddeck, Nova Scotia. June 14, 1911. Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell, 1331 Conn. Ave., N. W., Washington, D. C. Dear Mabel:

Landed at Hawkesbury from the steamer "Halifax" shivering with the cold. Light silk stockings and Washington summerwear decidedly inappropriate. Glad I had my overcoat and traveling rug. Also my traveling cap for I find a straw hat quite out of the fashion here.

Capt. Murdoch McDonald met me at Hawkesbury with the "Kiaora", with which I am sure you will be pleased. Murdoch and his assistant looked quite swell in their uniforms and caps marked "Kia Ora".

Lily Ker and her maid, and your two maids, Mary Flynn and Mary O'Neill stayed at Hawkesbury all night and took the train for Iona yesterday (June 13) arriving here in the evening. Maggie had to put on a big fire in the kitchen to thaw the girls out. I suppose Lily looked after herself in her own house.

I left Hawkesbury on the "Kiaora" Monday evening (June 12) about half past eight. Maggie had been thoughtful enough to send on a full supply of B. B. warm clothing; but, unfortunately, Capt. Murdoch McDonald forgot to tell me anything about it. As it was a pretty cold night and the boat open I would have had a pretty bad night had it not been for the fact that Maggie had forwarded a camp bedstead and mattresses from the Houseboat with plenty of blankets. We had to anchor for the night in Lennox Channel, about half way to St. Peter's, on account of the numerous fish nets with which the passage beyond was strewn. I enjoyed the night immensely. Clear, cold, and almost full moon. I was quite warm and comfortable wrapped up among the blankets.

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Yesterday morning (June 13) at daybreak we started off for St Peter's; and I appreciated Capt. McDonald's carefulness in anchoring for the night. We had difficult work in dodging the fish nets, which were strewn thickly everywhere; and were made of such thick twine or rope that they might have carried off our propeller had we caught upon them. They were very difficult to see until you were right on them; and then there was a sudden swerving of the boat to right or to left as the case might be. Lobster traps were also quite numerous, but we didn't mind them and passed over several.

We reached St. Peter's about half past five o'clock in the morning and had a very good breakfast of Houseboat supplies and hard boiled eggs while waiting for the Locks to be opened.

After leaving St. Peter's our engine began to give trouble. Right in the middle of the Great Bras d'Or Lake it stopped all together and poor Murdoch and his assistant spent nearly an hour fussing over the engine. It was fortunate that the Lake was calm; and at last they succeeded in getting the engine to start again. From this point we made a quick trip to Beinn Bhreagh going at about a 12 ½ mile gait. Mr and Mrs. Kennan were on the Central Wharf to meet me; also Mr. Byrnes and Mr. Manchester. I found Mabel McCurdy at the Hall all ready to begin work; and later on Lena McCurdy looked in for a few minutes.

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Maggie Campbell looked very nice. She is undoubtedly growing old. Her black hair has disappeared and has now a decidedly frosty look. Mr. Davidson looks just the same as ever and his family are all well. I forgot John McDermid, who, of course, was at the wharf to meet me. He looks better than he has ever done before. Has a good color and looks strong and well. He drove me up to the Point in the buckboard with two pretty big horses. One of them at least was new; and I did not quite like his spirited action.

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Late in the afternoon I disappeared and it was nearly ten o'clock before I wakened up for my dinner. Then Davidson came over and we had a conference about sheep which lasted until 2 a. m. when I turned him out in case his wife should becoming anxious about him.

I reeived your telegram of June 12 from Atlantic City, but unfortunately you failed to give an address so I shall be obliged to send any telegrams to 1331 Conn. Ave.

I am having Pansy Lodge fitted up as an office, to be used until Bert comes up to turn me out.

Have spent this morning in putting into black and white the conclusions at which Mr Davidson and I arrived last night relating to the sheep.

I hope that you and Elsie are having a nice quiet time at Atlantic City. Hope you won't be long in coming up. DRESS WARMLY WHEN YOU DO. No need here for a swimming bath room.

Your loving Alec